

# City Page

NEWS & INFORMATION FROM THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE

## At Your Service

**Q:** The cost of gas is taking its toll on my wallet, and I am looking for some options. I am interested in starting a vanpool, but I would like to know more details before I commit to organizing one.

**A:** Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) has two vanpool programs, vanpool and minivan. A vanpool consists of 9-15 passengers, and a minivan has 4-7 passengers. One person must agree to be the primary driver and at least one other rider must be a backup driver. If you agree to be a driver, you ride free. A vanpool coordinator can assist you through the entire process and help match you with others in your area. If you are not interested in organizing the vanpool, CATS also can help you find available vacancies in existing vanpools.

For more information or to use the vanpool calculator to estimate your cost of being part of a vanpool and compare it to your current commuting costs, visit [www.ridetransit.org](http://www.ridetransit.org) or call 704.336.RIDE.



CATS offers two vanpool programs, vanpool and minivan.

## Small Office-Home Office Workshops

Need to finance your business? Need operating funds? Need to start your business? An Innovative Bank SOHO Loan may be your answer. The City of Charlotte Small Business Development Program and the Biz Hub Small Business Information Center are hosting two Small Office-Home Office Financing Workshops on Monday, August 15. Learn about SBA programs and apply for a loan at the workshops.

9:30—11:30 a.m.

Main Library, 310 N. Tryon St.

Lower Level Auditorium

To register, call (704) 432-0505

6—9 p.m.

Room CH-14 (Basement Level)

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center

600 E. 4th St.

To register, call (704) 336-2473

## Safe Speed celebrates first anniversary

It's been a year since the City implemented Safe Speed, an automated speed program to reduce the number of high speed collisions within Charlotte. Similar to the City's SafeLight technology, which photographs and tickets cars running red lights, Safe Speed photographs cars speeding along designated roads in Charlotte. To date, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) has issued 30,091 Safe Speed citations. Of those, 170 were appealed and all but 10 have been upheld.

While new to Charlotte, automated speed enforcement had been used in other cities for more than 25 years. It had been shown to reduce incidents of speeding and vehicle crashes, while freeing up public safety resources. The official study to determine the technology's impact on speeding isn't due until this winter. However, based on his unit's observations over the past year, Capt. Dave Haggist, who heads CMPD's Highway Interdiction Traffic Safety (HITS) Program, believes the technology has reduced the number of high speed incidents.



Since implementing Safe Speed, CMPD has issued 30,091 citations for speeding.

"Safe Speed has had a positive impact," said Haggist. "For us it's been a win-win situation. We've been able to reduce speeding in several key areas without stretching our resources." He added that Safe Speed also creates a "halo effect," decreasing speeding on roads surrounding the targeted corridors. An independent report on the effectiveness of Safe Speed from the N.C. State University Institute for Transportation Research and Education is due in December 2005. This report will help the City and CMPD determine whether to ask State legislators to make Safe Speed a permanent addition to the City's traffic safety initiatives.

Safe Speed uses laser technology that is target-specific and more precise than conventional radar systems. To confirm a vehicle is targeted, the laser signal is encrypted on the photograph of the speeding vehicle. To ensure accuracy, a CMPD officer operates the equipment and checks it daily for calibration.

In this test phase, CMPD only can place Safe Speed along 14 designated high crash corridors. These streets constitute less than two percent of the City's total road mileage but account for more than 30 percent of speed related crashes. Revenue generated by the fines pay for the system's operating costs and any remaining funds go to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

## Safety tips for avoiding child pedestrian injuries

The warm weather coupled with the start of school will have children outside more frequently, putting them at greater risk for injury. Despite recent declines, pedestrian injury remains the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 5 to 14. To ensure the safety of your children, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign recommends the following:

- Don't allow a child under age 10 to cross streets alone.
- Require children to carry a flashlight at night, dawn and dusk. Add retroreflective materials to children's clothing.
- Prohibit play in driveways, unfenced yards, streets or parking lots.
- Make sure your children take the same route to common destinations (such as school) every time. Look for the most direct route with the fewest street crossings.
- Practical, skills-based training improves child pedestrian behavior. Take the time to teach your child to:
  - o Look left, right and left again before crossing the street. Cross when the street is clear, and keep looking both ways while crossing. Walk, don't run.
  - o Understand and obey traffic signals and signs.
  - o Cross at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks when available.
  - o Stop at the curb or at the edge of the road if there is no curb, before crossing the street. Darting into the street accounts for the majority of child pedestrian fatalities.
  - o Walk facing traffic, on sidewalks or paths. Walk as far to the left as possible if there are no sidewalks.



Pedestrian injury remains the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 5 to 14.

For the complete list of safety tips, visit [www.safekidschameck.org](http://www.safekidschameck.org).